

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3399

ANSWERED ON:16.04.2008

STUDY ON SEX RATIO

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Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether according to a research conducted by the Action Aid, an International Funding Organisation, there are only 500 girls for every 1000 boys in some rural areas of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh;
- (b) if so, the details of the findings thereof;
- (c) whether such sex ratio figure puts India even below the other third world countries;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE(SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) to (e) The Government does not seem to have received any report on the research reportedly conducted by 'Action Aid' on Child Sex Ratio. However, the information furnished by the Office of the Registrar General of India indicates that the Sex Ratio (SR) (number of females per thousand males) has increased from 927 to 933 from 1991 to 2001. However, the Child Sex Ratio (CSR) has declined from 945 to 927 during the same period.

The figures further reveal that the Child Sex ratio is comparatively lower in the affluent regions, i.e. Punjab (798), Haryana (819), Chandigarh (845), Delhi (868), Gujarat (883) and Himachal Pradesh (896). State/UT wise Sex Ratio (SR) and Child Sex Ratio (CSR) as per 1991 and 2001 Census is Annexed.

Some of the reasons commonly put forward to explain the consistently low levels of Child Sex Ratio are son preference, neglect of the girl child resulting in higher mortality at younger age, female infanticide, female foeticide, higher maternal mortality and male bias in enumeration of population. Easy availability of the sex determination tests may also be proving to be catalyst in the process, which may be further stimulated by pre-conception sex selection facilities.

The Government has taken action on strengthening the Pre-Conception & Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act (PC & PNDT Act) as well as creating awareness on the issue through various IEC mechanisms. Some of the steps taken by the Government to improve the Child Sex Ratio in the Country are: Constitution of the Central Supervisory Board under the Chairmanship of Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare, whose function, inter alia, is to review and monitor implementation of the Act and Rules & Regulations made thereunder and recommend to the Central Government changes in the said Act and Rules, where required, and to create public awareness against the practice of pre-conception sex selection and pre-natal determination of sex of foetus leading to female foeticide; constitution of the National Inspection & Monitoring Committee for undertaking field visits periodically across the country, and constitution of the National Support & Monitoring Cell for effective implementation of the Act, training of Judiciary, publication of Annual Reports, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), On-Line Complaint facility on the Ministry's Website, organizing sensitization workshops/seminars, launching of 'Save the Girl Child' campaign, seeking cooperation from the NGOs/religious leaders, etc. Further, under the National Rural Health Mission, Auxiliary Nursing Midwife (ANM) and Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) are being sensitized on the issue. Also, funds have been provided to all States/UTs under the Rural Child Health Programme for implementation of the Act and related activities.